

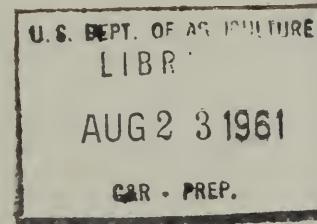
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Report



REPORT ON MANAGEMENT,
IMPROVEMENT AND
MANPOWER UTILIZATION,

JANUARY - JUNE, 1961



U.S. AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION
AND CONSERVATION SERVICE
Operations Analysis Staff

ASCS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

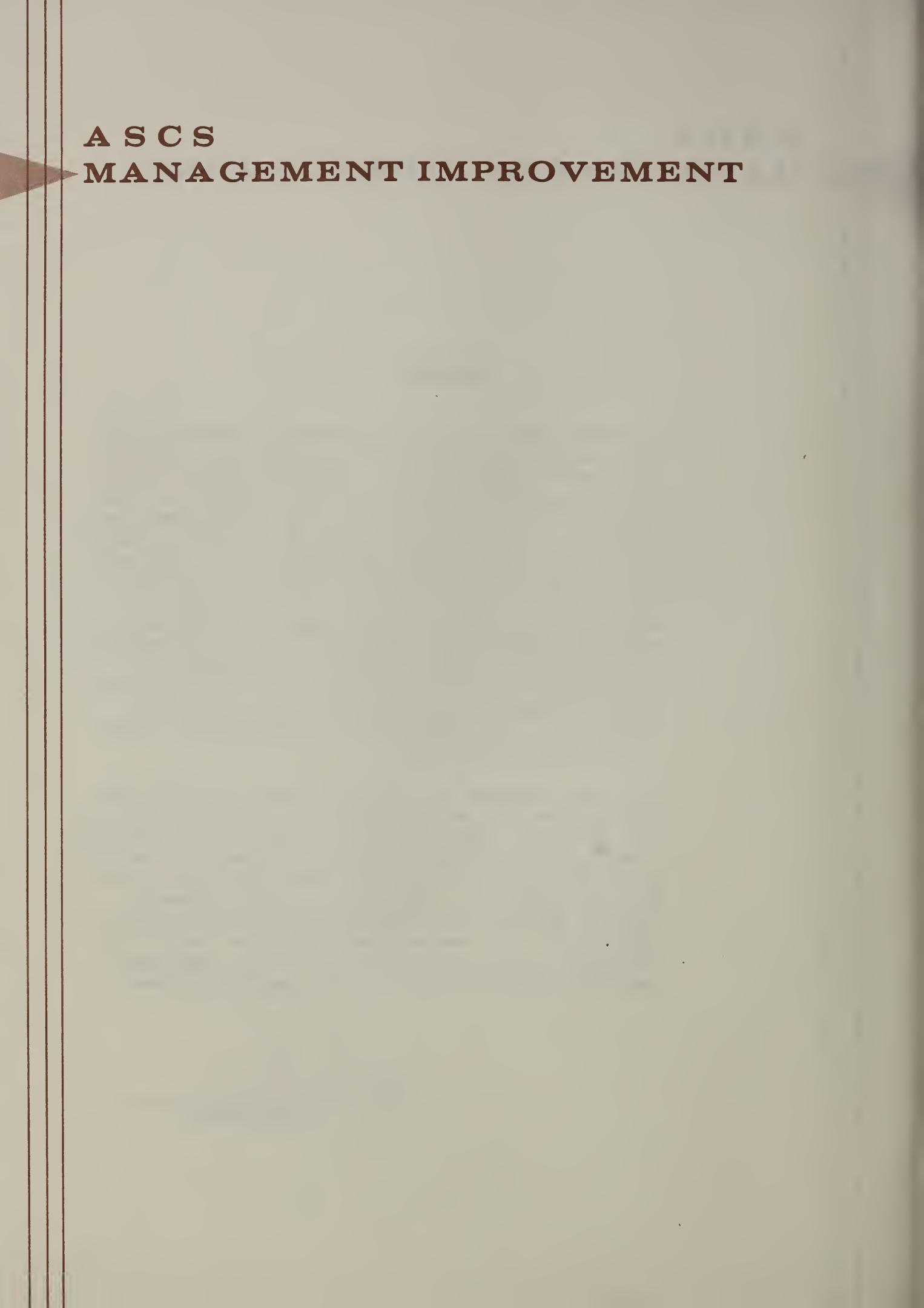
FOREWORD

We in government today have an unusual opportunity to share in the responsibility for meeting the challenges of a rapidly changing time. The nature of our assignment obligates us to bring the rewards of our new technologies to the people we serve. An equally important obligation is to minimize the disruptions these changes might bring to the people affected by them. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service has a particularly significant role to play in helping to assure the most effective and humane use of our agricultural abundance while retaining the productivity of our soil during a time of difficult adjustment to a changing agricultural technology. We in ASCS must work tirelessly and with imagination to insure the proper discharge of our responsibility in the movement across the frontiers of our time.

With great personal satisfaction I have noted the many fine evidences of our improving management that this report contains. Under the able guidance of our Secretary of Agriculture efforts to improve management throughout the Department are taking on renewed vigor and purpose. We in ASCS share his interest in providing dynamic, forceful and progressive management to the programs we administer. It is my personal conviction that all of the people in our Agency will rise to the challenge of improving management in the years immediately ahead.



W. D. McPhee
Administrator



ASC S

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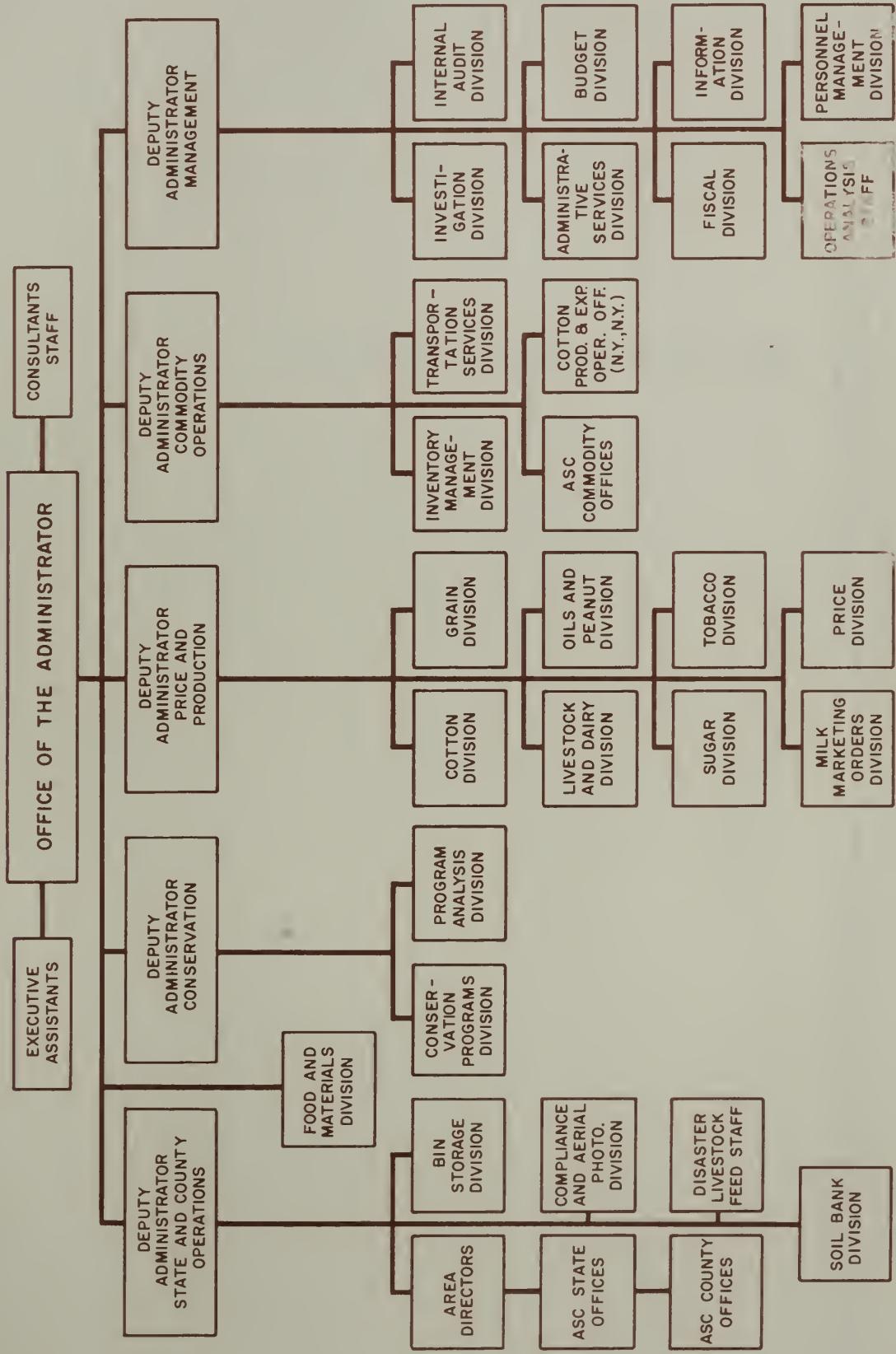
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AGRICULTURAL STABILIZATION AND CONSERVATION SERVICE



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OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR



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OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Implementing the Feed Grain Program

The passage of the Feed Grain Bill, March 22, 1961 required Department officials to move quickly in order for farmers to be able to capitalize on the opportunities presented for early relief to producers and consumers of feed grain and feed grain products. To permit producers to participate in the program during this crop year it was necessary to implement it almost immediately before large quantities of feed grains had been planted. Congress required a report be filed within ninety days of the bill's passage setting forth such information as the number and percentage of cooperators, the acreage retired from production by states, cash payments made, the quantity and kind of feed grains made available under the payment-in-kind provisions of the Act and their value, the overall cost of the program, and estimated savings compared to previous programs plus other pertinent information.

The program was designed in February during a meeting of feed grain farmers and Department representatives convened to deal with the emergency of planting time arriving without a workable program. Upon the passage of the bill it was rushed to the President for his signature so that Department officials could leave that evening to carry the program to State ASC Committees. Within three days every State Committee in the nation had been informed of program provisions.

Other Department employees working rapidly completed program procedures, forms, information bulletins, undertook training and handled the myriad other details necessary to administer the program almost immediately. Farmers have taken the opportunity to cooperate together to solve the feed grain problem in greater numbers than had been expected. Thirty-one percent of the base acres for grain sorghums and twenty-three percent of the base acres for corn have been diverted by the program for the 1961 crop year. These acres came from forty-two percent of all eligible farms.

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In return for reducing the acreage planted to feed grains cooperators benefit from price supports on that that they do produce. Acres diverted from feed grain production are conserved by approved practices. Cooperators are paid for carrying out these practices by certificates redeemable in kind from feed grains in CCC inventory. Those who would rather receive cash may do so by asking CCC to act as their agent in disposing of the feed grain. Half the estimated total payment may be collected by the farmer as soon as he signified he would cooperate in the program. Non-cooperators receive none of the program's direct benefits.

The Secretary of Agriculture has estimated that the land retirement program would save storage and handling costs of about \$500 million.

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Reorganization of ASCS

The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service was reorganized to fit the changed assignments in functions made by the Secretary and to provide greater operating efficiency with no increase in personnel or funds required. The name was changed from Commodity Stabilization Service to recognize more fully all of the Agency's functions and provide a relatively simple means of directly identifying State and County Offices as part of the Agency.

The reorganized Agency reflects the Department's efforts to simplify communications and coordination. The transfer of the Barter and Stockpiling and General Sales Manager functions to FAS provides a basis for their close coordination with related foreign trade activities. Internal reorganization should likewise serve to straighten lines of communication.

Authority and responsibility for commodity operations are centralized under a single Deputy Administrator. The seven commodity offices, the New York Cotton Products and Export Operations Office, the Transportation Services Division and inventory management functions which together are commodity operations now report to a common Deputy Administrator for Commodity Operations. Transfer of the inventory management functions to the DACO centralizes responsibility for commercial trade relations and inventory business problems with one official who has daily contact with commodity offices while permitting commodity divisions to concentrate their efforts on the income problems of farmers.

Similarly, administrative management functions are the full time responsibility of one Deputy Administrator. The Internal Audit and Compliance and Investigation Divisions are under his administrative

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control. They will continue to receive policy guidance and present their findings to the Price Support, Acreage Allotment and Marketing Quota determinations have been placed under one Deputy where formerly they were split between two. Full responsibility for CCC-owned storage facilities operation has also been placed under one Deputy. The Disaster Livestock Feed Staff now reports to a Deputy Administrator rather than directly to the Administrator.

The Milk Marketing Agreement and Order and the ACP functions have been placed in the organization so as to disturb their operations least and preserve their identity.

The new organization thus more clearly groups related functions under a single Deputy Administrator. A basis for direct communication and ease of coordination is thereby provided.

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Automatic Reading Equipment

A potentially far reaching experiment in data processing techniques is being conducted in ASCS. Equipment is becoming available that will read typewritten pages and convert the characters to machine readable language such as that appearing on punch cards and magnetic tape. The potential applications for equipment of this sort are immense in ASCS. To keep abreast of developments in this field so that we might get the earliest possible beneficial use of these readers considerable research is being done both in Washington and in the field.

The New Orleans Commodity Office is working with equipment suppliers in an effort to perfect a method for converting cotton loan documents directly from typewritten copy to magnetic tape. The system now envisioned would include forwarding loan documents from field offices to the commodity office where they would be retyped to a standard high quality. The document would then be fed into a scanner that would read it and convert the characters to magnetic tape language and transmit the data to a magnetic tape for immediate processing through a computer.

The system would substitute retyping of documents for key punching cards -- a cheaper and more accurate procedure. In addition scanning equipment is able to convert characters to magnetic tape faster than can be done with punch card equipment.

Equipment for reading documents that is currently available is limited in its ability to read common type fonts. The expectation is, however, that within the foreseeable future they will be able to read several type fonts. Conceivably at that time documents could be prepared at scattered locations and mailed to a central point to be read by a central scanner which would convert the characters to magnetic tape for direct input to a computer. The computer would process the data and print

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out whatever documents and reports the outlying offices would need, all in a matter of minutes.

The potential for ASCS is great. Early benefits from this kind of equipment will probably be limited. The prospects are, however, that within a few years ASCS will enjoy considerable relief from costly repetitive work that will permit its people to concentrate their energies on the more complex and rewarding aspects of their jobs.

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ASC STATE COMMITTEES

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ALABAMA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Training County Committeemen

Special emphasis has recently been placed on familiarizing County Committeemen with ASCS programs and committee responsibility. In recognition of their key role in the success of ASCS programs, the Alabama State Office has taken several steps to insure that County Committeemen are confident, interested participants in State ASCS programs. The first meeting of each county committee is attended by the district fieldman to orient new members and to remind returning members of the purpose and objectives of ASCS programs. Responsibilities and duties of committeemen and office managers are discussed in detail at this meeting. Committee members review current instructions with the office manager at each regularly scheduled county meeting. Major changes in programs and instructions are discussed with committeemen by fieldmen and program specialists during their attendance at district meetings held throughout the year. A member of the State Committee attends at least one committee meeting in each county during the years. These meetings enable County Committeemen to discuss local problems with the State Committee and also provide an opportunity for county office employees to meet the State Committee.

Representatives of other agricultural agencies are invited to attend certain county committee meetings so that each agency can come to better understand the work of the other.

Incentive Awards Program

Increased participation in the Awards Program is being realized by requiring the program specialists who review the suggestion to comment at the subsequent meeting of the Awards Committee. The Awards Committee meets monthly with the fieldman and the Program Specialist. Each suggestion is reviewed by the entire group. The committee then later meets to determine proper disposition of each suggestion.

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ALABAMA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

The program is getting additional publicity by including the names of suggestors and the amount they received in the State Administrative Officer's monthly newsletter to county office personnel and committeemen. The renewed emphasis on the Awards Program has resulted in a 60% increase in the number of suggestions received during the last six months.

ARKANSAS ASC STATE COMMITTEE

State Office Space

Plans are nearly complete for the Arkansas ASCS State Office to move into quarters in the new Federal Building in Little Rock. Office equipment and furniture have been surveyed with the aid of the Administrative Services Division, useable old furniture is being refinished and some new is being acquired.

CALIFORNIA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Wool Payment Applications

A new agreement between wool association officers and county office personnel makes it possible for the county office to deal directly with producers in settlement of wool payment applications. Producer applications are now made directly by the producers to ASCS county offices where formerly they were made to the county office through the association. The additional handling had led to errors which became the subject of recent audits and investigations. More comprehensive compliance reporting for purchased unshorn lambs now seems assured.

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DELAWARE ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Public Relations

The State Office has taken steps to obtain better newspaper coverage for ASCS programs in local newspapers throughout the State. Plans are being made to contact farmers and the general public through speeches and discussions at service and civic clubs throughout Delaware.

IDAHO ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Action Committees

To help provide an atmosphere of closer operation while utilizing the talents of many employees, the Idaho ASCS State Office has formed and is using a number of action committees for such work as equipment surveys, records disposition, management improvement, training, workload, and incentive awards. Formal rules have been established to guide the committees and include requirements for an organization meeting, reports, assistants, and help from professional and technical people. Specific guides for each committee have been formulated and issued.

KANSAS ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Management Improvement Plans

The Kansas Office has developed a systematic plan for improving management in ASC county offices. Working jointly, State Office personnel, Farmer Fieldmen, County Office Managers and Operations Assistants have made many recommendations for improving county office operations.

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KANSAS ASC STATE COMMITTEE

The most prevalent recommendations have been for:

1. Systematic review by County Office Managers of the work of employees.
2. Improved documentation of administrative and program matters by county office personnel.
3. Reemphasis of continual cross training of county office personnel aimed at providing them with a better understanding of all county office activities. This provides a better realization of the need to give accurate information and the best possible service to farmers.
4. Clearer more definite assumption of responsibilities by making definite assignments.
5. Encouragement of the desire for improvement and the utilization of the counsel and assistance available from fieldmen, Operations Assistants and program operation personnel.

LOUISIANA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Visual Aids

The use of visual aids to support training sessions has been reemphasized from ideas gained from the last management improvement report. Thirty-five millimeter projections for each Farmer Fieldmen's District have been acquired for meetings in each district. A number of parishes have used the equipment to aid in conducting performance training meetings. The State Office plans to expand the use of these projectors for making slides in the office.

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MAINE ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Communications

The State Committee is now meeting in each Farmer Fieldman's district once each year. County committees from that district are invited to attend, and one of the county committees holds its meeting prior to the meeting of the State Committee. The joint meeting that has been held proved to be an excellent way to better inform the State Committee of local problems, create interest and train county committeemen to conduct good meetings.

The day after each monthly State Committee meeting a staff meeting of the State Administrative Officer, fieldmen, specialists and Operations Assistants is held. During these meetings each participant discusses his activities, makes plans for the ensuing month and discusses questions that have arisen since the last state conference. The conferences have helped to insure coordination of efforts. By holding them the day after the State Committee meeting, travel expenses for monthly meetings are minimized since fieldmen attend both.

MARYLAND ASC STATE COMMITTEE

ACP

Maryland has adopted a modified version of the Indiana State ACP Handbook described in the December, Management Improvement Report. An additional effort to simplify administration of the ACP program includes a time and flow study of ACP forms. Each of the major ACP forms has been traced and times measured and allotted for each step in its processing. The study indicates that the processing of these forms can be expedited to provide better service to farmers. The office plans

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MARYLAND ASC STATE COMMITTEE

that if the study proves to be productive it will be extended to other programs.

Recognition of County Office Improvement

Counties showing marked improvement in their operations during this fiscal year are being presented an attractive certificate and will get local newspaper publicity. The presentation of the certificate is made at a joint meeting of the State and county committees. The State Committee makes the presentation based on the analysis of the State Office staff during the fiscal year.

MINNESOTA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Utilization of Operation Assistants

More effective use of Operation Assistants is being gained by assigning a specific group of counties as a continuing responsibility for each assistant. Each assistant is expected to help counties administer their programs, aid them in the training of county office personnel and identify and attempt to bring about correction of poor practices.

Monthly, assistants meet with the district fieldmen and other State Office officials to work out the assistants itineraries. Operations Assistants now have a better opportunity for follow up in their assigned counties and are exhibiting a keener interest and more personal responsibility for the counties specifically assigned to them.

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MONTANA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

State Office Reorganization

Related functions have been placed together in organizational units as a result of a recent reorganization of the Montana State Office. Through staff meetings and consultation of Program Specialists, certain functions have been transferred within the office to divisions more clearly responsible for the functions. The reorganization has brought about more direct lines of responsibility and has made possible improvements in supervisory control. To date the reorganization appears to be resulting in improved opportunities for training supervisors in a total program while at the same time making work flow and other operations more effective.

NEW YORK ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Work Shops for Office Managers

Two-day work shops have recently been held in each Farmer Fieldman's district as the initial session in a training program for County Office Managers in communication and creative thinking. During the first day, County Office Managers prepared and presented a newsletter to committeemen, a talk to a civic group, a reply to a typical letter from a farmer and a general letter to farmers. After a presentation, each member of the group analyzed, criticized and suggested ways of improving the material. The second day was devoted to Creative Thinking and Creative Problem Solving. Continuing their interest in these techniques, the New York State Office offered principles of creative thinking and individual and group brainstorming. Exercises utilizing the brainstorming techniques later in the day offered evidence of the value of these techniques.

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NEW YORK ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Understudy Program

The State Office has instituted a program to prepare employees to assume more responsible positions. An example of the program is illustrated by the recent assignment of one County Office Manager to a Program Specialist's job and another to the job of Chief of the Administration Division. While these managers were in the State Office, an employee in their offices was assigned as County Office Manager trainee.

NORTH CAROLINA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Visual Aids

The "tell and show" method of conducting all meetings is proving its success in North Carolina. From the premise that communications in meetings are best if the talk is accompanied by pictures, the office continues to improve its visual aids. Among the equipment that is utilized is the Vu-Graph and overlays, flip charts, Opaque Projector, slide projector, flannel board, movies and a recently acquired automatic slide projector with tape record and commentary. The office force makes their own slides to fit their actual needs. It is therefore unnecessary to use other agency's slides which often proved to be only partial substitutes for what was actually needed.

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PENNSYLVANIA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

County Office Space

Construction of the York County office from private funds has been successfully promoted by the York County ASC Committee with the cooperation of the State Office. The one story building contains 1,350 square feet of office space and is adjacent to ample parking. The space was designed specifically to accommodate county office needs and accordingly the space will be used effectively at a minimum cost. A similiar plan is being promoted by the Lancaster County ASC Office.

SOUTH DAKOTA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Bin Site Aeration

Installation of nearly 13,000 aeration units to circulate fresh air through grain stored in bin sites has done much to improve the condition of grain in storage. A Brown County man, experienced in bin site operations, wrote "Not until inspection this spring did I realize the benefits derived from aeration. Those bins having air forced through them can just about be picked out every time just by the condition of the grain on top".

Conservation Reserve Compliance

Compliance with Conservation Reserve Program contracts has tended to be lax since the Soil Bank Program was not extended by congress. South Dakota has over 10,000 Conservation Reserve contracts in force at the present time. The state office has alerted all of its people to constantly check on performance as they

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SOUTH DAKOTA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

travel about the state. These observations are made while officials are traveling in connection with their regular duties and require no additional administrative expense.

County offices have been furnished with detailed procedures which farmers can follow to combat grasshoppers. This is part of a public relations effort to meet public criticism of Conservation Reserve Acreages serving as breeding grounds for grasshoppers. Cooperation with farmers and the general public is being made in this continuing combat to control grasshoppers even though scientifically conducted surveys have demonstrated that criticism of the Conservation Reserve Acreages is largely unjustified.

VERMONT ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Information for Committeemen

Efforts to keep State, county, and community committeemen informed about all phases of ASC activities gained renewed emphasis this year. In January all county and community committeemen received a statement concerning the work of ASC committees. The statement was designed to help committeemen understand their role in the ASC effort. A second step to familiarize all committeemen with their jobs was January meetings between committeemen and members of the state office. These meetings were followed up by a February review of the work done by the State committee during May and June of the previous year. A series of meetings with community committeemen has been held to discuss forestry practices and ACP. The success of the latter series is owed in part to the excellent cooperation and participation received from the extension forester and from the State Forest Service.

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VIRGINIA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Annual County Reports

For the information of farmers and others interested in ASC activities, each county office in Virginia prepares an annual report that is attractively bound and illustrated. The reports summarize activities in each program. Summaries are supported by appropriate statistics, charts and graphs.

The reports include acknowledgment of the assistance received from radio stations, newspapers, and other government agencies such as the Soil Conservation Service and the Extension Service.

Bankers, businessmen, other agricultural agencies and ASC committeemen, as well as farmers are included on the mailing list in each county. The reports are frequently the subject of lengthy articles in local newspapers. The reports have been well received. Many people have commented on their value in keeping them abreast of ASC activities.

Survey of ASCS County Office Space and Equipment

A recent survey was conducted in each county office by Operations Assistants to determine the adequacy and effectiveness of space, equipment, and furniture. Excess property that could be transferred to other county offices was identified. The surveys have resulted in improvements ranging from a new light fixture for one county office to the need for new quarters for another county office.

Improved Writing

The quality of writing in county offices is improving as a result of a series of work shops conducted by members of the State Office for County Office Managers.

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VIRGINIA ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Using as their basic texts the records management handbook and the guide "Plain Letters", the meetings help managers to prepare better press releases, radio scripts, newsletters and general correspondence. Workbooks to supplement "Plain Letters" are provided so that managers may later complete the exercises and mail the results to the State Office. Upon successful completion of the course each manager receives a certificate of training.

WISCONSIN ASC STATE COMMITTEE

Allocation of Tobacco Allotments

To insure allocation of tobacco allotments on a uniform basis by County Committees, the State Committee and a representative of the Tobacco Division met with County Committees to develop a systematic way of making allotments. In past years, the state reserve for old farm tobacco allotment adjustments had been allocated to tobacco growing counties for disposition by the County Committee to farmers requesting adjustments. In some counties, committeemen thought it to be their duty to issue the county's entire reserve. In other counties, only half of the available adjustment acreage has been issued. The system which has been designed to bring about equity in the manner of allocating adjustments follows:

1. Define three situations, any of which would make a farmer eligible for an allotment adjustment.
2. The Farmer Fieldman participates with each of his County Committees to bring about similar consideration of the factors leading to the classification of a farm.

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WISCONSIN ASC STATE COMMITTEE

3. The fieldman reviews the County Committee recommendation on each case. The fieldman in turn forwards the case with his recommendation to the State Committee.
4. The State Committee determines the individual allotment adjustment to be made and issues an acreage allocation to each county to cover the approved adjustments. The unused portion of the State Acreage Reserve for Adjustments is retained in the state reserve.

The tighter uniform control has proven very satisfactory. The demand for tobacco made it desirable to minimize adjustments. Even so, the uniform system of making adjustments has made it possible for producers to know that they have been treated equitably.

Storage Facility and Mobile Dryer Programs

Better service to producers who utilize Farm Storage Facility and Mobile Dryer Equipment Loans is being provided by vendors who have recently been alerted to the need to obtain adequate program information from the ASCS County Offices. Internal Auditors and Operations Assistants turned up a number of minor deviations from instructions in the disbursement of loans. Documents for each loan were thoroughly reviewed by the Operations Assistants. Each review was discussed with the County Office Manager and Committee.



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COMMODITY OFFICES



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PORTLAND ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Secretarial Development

Upon the suggestion of one of the Director's secretaries, the Portland Commodity Office has installed a formal system for preparing secretaries for higher level jobs. It had been the practice to replace an absent secretary with a member of the Stenographic Pool. Frequently, these employees had little or no experience in secretarial duties, and were not equipped to take full advantage of the opportunity to prepare for a higher graded job. The new system provides that Grades GS-6 and GS-7 Director's secretaries are relieved by GS-5 Division Chiefs' secretaries. Division Chiefs' secretaries are relieved by GS-4 clerk-stenographers from the section and unit level who are in turn relieved by GS-3 clerk-stenographers from the Pool. The experience each gains is noted so that equal opportunity for relief assignments is assured. Candidates for secretarial positions that become vacant have gained a working knowledge of the position while more satisfactory relief assistance has been made available. The system, which was agreed to in a staff meeting, has been formalized in a Personnel Management Handbook.

Training in Administration for Warehouse Examiners

Warehouse Examiners in the Portland area are being given four-week administrative assignments in the Commodity Office so that their potential for advancement to administrative jobs can be evaluated while they gain a better understanding of administrative procedures and commodity office operation. During their stay in the office each Examiner:

1. Reviews examination reports from all districts, paying particular attention to 'red flag' reports and summary reports which he discusses with the Section or Division Chief.

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PORLAND ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

2. Reviews Compliance and Investigation Reports.
3. Recommends needed improvements in Warehouse Examination Procedures.
4. Performs some of the duties of the Section Chief.
5. Learns related storage contracting procedures.
6. Learns processes related to warehouse examination by observing operations in the Fiscal Division, Program Operations Division and the administrative staff.

Examiners are assigned to the program based on their seniority and the examination schedule in their district. The program is helping to create a more positive relationship between Examiners and office personnel as well as providing them with a clearer understanding of office procedures related to their work. Their review of problems arising in all seven states has better equipped them to guide other examiners in their own districts. Responsible office officials have been given an opportunity to evaluate the Examiners' potential for reassessments or promotions in administrative jobs.

Grain Fumigation

In the grain storage fleet at Astoria, Oregon, it is necessary to continually protect against moth and other insect infestation. The Portland Commodity Office, which is responsible for the fleet, has adopted a fog type fumigant for the ships which is proving more effective and less expensive than previously used liquid fumigants.

Liquid fumigants were effective against infestation in the top two feet of the grain and the flying infestation immediately above it. The fog fumigants kill moths and larvae far above the grain as well as those within it, without leaving as much residue on the grain as the liquids did.

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PORLAND ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Fog can be applied by one man in far less time than it took three men to apply liquids. The operation consists of lowering three inch flexible tube attached to the nozzle of the fogger through the mast house ventilator to a point just above the grain. The fogging lasts for several hours and assures a kill in all void space.

Analysis of Warehousemen's Financial Statements

Reviews of warehousemen's financial statements have been given greater emphasis recently toward identifying possible trouble spots before rather than after problems arise. The Portland office appointed an experienced warehouse examiner who has an accounting background as Assistant Chief of the Storage Contracting Section. He is to make a thorough analysis of warehousemen's financial statements. To further insure continuing full use of this safeguard he, the Section Chief and the Assistant Chief of the Division were given an intensive course in Analysis of Financial Statements conducted by the American Banking Institute.

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NEW ORLEANS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Improved Controls of Transit Privileges

ASCS is faced with a continuing need to manage its valuable transit rights. These rights, worth perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars, are complex to account for and give rise to many peculiar claims and application problems. Each commodity office is responsible for maintaining the inventory of transit for its own area. Because of local trade differences, dissimilar commodities and the patterns of transportation, transit management is necessarily different for each commodity office.

In another part of this report, solutions to some of the problems in the Dallas area are described. The New Orleans Commodity Office has taken steps to strengthen management of its peculiar transit problems.

To protect transit rights in New Orleans, a quarterly analysis of all freight bills has recently been instituted. Freight bills (representing transit rights) are acquired for given lots of cotton. These rights may be transferred to other cotton or they may be used in part to help pay for the movements of less than carload lots of cotton. Recently, to insure optimum use of these rights, they have been related to individual bales of cotton, some of which may not be moved. The quarterly review makes it possible to anticipate the expiration of transit rights so that they can be scheduled for transfer to cotton that is moving before the rights expire.

With the transfer and splitting of individual freight bills, claims settlement frequently became very difficult. For instance, if the original freight payment was found to be in error after the transit right had been transferred and used, the error would affect each of the transactions leading to its eventual use. Additional checks now being made for each freight charge due have been so effective in eliminating discrepancies in settlements that the tedious tracing of errors is no longer necessary, except in rare instances. It appears that post examination of freight bills may no longer be necessary.

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NEW ORLEANS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Service to Sales Agents

Service to sales agents has been improved while reducing costs to CCC by requiring them to prepare and submit adequately supported vouchers to the New Orleans Commodity Office each month. Formerly, the voucher had been prepared in the New Orleans office from records that frequently were not received until two weeks after the close of the month's business. If the voucher and its supporting schedule of invoice number and number of bales on all invoices prepared by the agent balances with New Orleans records, the agent is paid his fee immediately. Otherwise, the agent's and the New Orleans' records must be reconciled before payment is made.

Expectations for the 1401 Data Processing Systems

Replacement of present equipment that is auxiliary to the 705-III computer in the New Orleans Commodity Office with three 1401 systems will provide the total data processing installation with greater capacity and flexibility at reduced cost. Initially, five such systems had been planned for but recent improvements in the equipment permit three modified systems to provide better service than five of the original systems.

The first of the three systems is to be installed in July of this year. When in full production these 1401's, in addition to replacing current auxiliary equipment, have the potential for doing some of the work now done on the 705-III. Realization of this potential will greatly reduce the costs of doing both these jobs. In addition, programs are interchangeable between the three 1401 systems thus permitting a high degree of flexibility. For instance, similar data could be processed on each system concurrently from one program.

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NEW ORLEANS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Minor Data Processing Systems

Major data processing systems in the New Orleans Commodity Office are constructed to utilize the computer whenever feasible. However, there are some systems that rely on strictly manual or electric accounting machine processing. The office has undertaken a series of studies to see if further mechanization of these systems is practicable.

One such system that is receiving early attention is the Work Status and related budgetary systems. With the aid of the computer, reports for management such as actual and comparative production rates and statistical data for budget reports could be quickly generated. It is possible, for instance, to feed into such a system anticipated workload by category and standard production rates and get out an estimate of manpower needs. If the early promise of such projects actually proves feasible, they will be more fully described in subsequent reports.

Warehouse Information Obtained from Up-Dated Applications for Warehouse Approval

All CCC-approved cotton warehouses have been requested to furnish new applications this year that include up-to-date information concerning warehouse identity, capacity and supporting facilities. Warehouse approval, if obtained since 1956, did not require subsequent reapplication by the warehouseman to remain in an approved status. It became apparent that much of the information on file with the New Orleans Commodity Office was obsolete.

To insure the validity of the data on file about each warehouse, houses not federally licensed are to undergo an original examination this year and again in five years.

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NEW ORLEANS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

With current information, correspondence between the commodity office and warehousemen will be facilitated. Review and approval of warehouseman's reports of occupancy and accompanying computations of insurance costs to be deducted to arrive at the net storage rate for settlement of charges will be simplified and will have a greater assurance of accuracy.

Storing Rented Office Equipment

Savings of \$1,359 annually result to CCC from an agreement recently reached between the New Orleans Commodity Office and I.B.M. To meet seasonal peaks and valleys in workload, it was necessary to ship rented key punch and verifier machines between New Orleans and Endicott, New York, at a cost of \$13.00 each.

Under a new agreement with the manufacturer, the equipment is stored in the New Orleans Office during periods of low workload. In addition to the saving of \$26.00 for each round trip, the equipment is now always readily available for immediate service.

ASCS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

MINNEAPOLIS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Collection of Sales Proceeds

Improved collection procedures will save the Minneapolis Commodity Office an estimated \$1,200 per year in interest. The new procedure enables the office to collect the proceeds of sales of producer delivered grain to warehousemen in six days rather than the sixteen days formerly required. CCC messengers pick up sales proceeds from warehousemen's terminal agents the second business day after invoicing. If a warehouseman does not have a terminal agent he is required to mail the proceeds directly to CCC upon receipt of the sale confirmation from the commodity office.

Punch Card Tabulator Aid In Selecting Warehouse Receipts

Two man-years per annum will be saved by Minneapolis in selecting punch card warehouse receipts to fill loading orders by the use of a punch card tabulator. Punch cards representing inventory are held in tub files. To fill a loading order cards representing the proper quantity and quality of grain are selected from the tub files. The cards are then inserted into the Monroe Punch Card Tabulator which reads them and produces an adding machine tape of the detail and the total.

The machine is also used for aiding in transit tonnage analysis, grain quality blending and inventory reporting. Other potential uses for the equipment exist in any card reading job where the volume of activity does not warrant using conventional tabulating equipment or where deadline requirements conflict with equipment schedules.

Payment of Warehouse Charges

Warehousemen can now invoice the Minneapolis Commodity Office immediately after charges for stored grain fall due as a result of a new procedure. The new method relies on an early cutoff date for recording warehouse

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MINNEAPOLIS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

stored grain acquisitions into inventory. The Commodity Office is now able to compute charges payable on such grain and mail the invoices to warehousemen in time to reach them on the first business day after the quarter, about three weeks earlier than in previous years. Charges accrued between the cutoff date and the end of the quarter are paid in supplemental invoices.

The grain trade representatives have been lavish in their praise of the new procedure which has eliminated the delays previously encountered in settling these accounts.

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KANSAS CITY ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Elimination of One Verification of Warehouse Receipts

Hundreds of man hours have been saved in the Kansas City Office by eliminating one of two verifications of individual warehouse receipts to related documents. It had been necessary at loan takeover time to compare each warehouse receipt to listings of forfeitures and to listings of acquisitions. Now, however, receipts are individually checked against the acquisition listings only. Acquisition totals are then checked against similar totals on the forfeiture listings. If they balance, it is assumed that the detail in each list is also accurate.

Three hundred thousand (300,000) warehouse receipts were involved this year so the savings have been considerable. In addition, the new procedure is much faster so that the receipts were available for merchandising in twenty-one days after the March closing, a faster operation than had heretofore been possible.

ASCS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

KANSAS CITY ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Computer Processing of Warehouse Receipt Inventory Records

More timely and accurate processing of inventory data is resulting from conversion of warehouse receipt data to computer processes in the Kansas City Commodity Office. The Kansas City Data Processing Center, since its installation, has processed certain data related to the grain loan program. The success of this venture has prompted the office to undertake processing certain of its inventory management data by computer processes as well. The first step in this transition is to get the basic inventory data as represented by warehouse receipts on magnetic tape where it is readily accessible to computer processes. The successful completion of this initial and very significant step speaks well for eventual automation of all feasible parts of inventory management.

With inventory on magnetic tape the Kansas City Office will be able to prepare trusts for the disposition and movement of grain and compute periodic storage payments with their Univac II. The advantages to the office include the more frequent, less time consuming generation of management and operating reports, faster more accurate purification of data, preparation of more timely and detailed statements of charges for handling and storing grain and more efficient preparation of trusts, loading orders, and acquisition listings.

The installation of the new system was preceded by careful analysis and evaluation of the existing manual and punch card systems. The new and old systems have been carefully costed and the advantages of the new system are being gained with at most relatively nominal additional costs. The early parallel runs of data through the old and new systems have proven the new system to be highly satisfactory.

ASCS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

KANSAS CITY ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Kansas City Photostatic Reproductions

The photostatic reproduction workload increased in the Kansas City Commodity Office to the extent that more equipment capacity was required. Before acquiring a new machine and hiring an additional operator, a study was made that determined that necessary photographic reproduction work was being delayed. The office then reviewed available equipment and found that by substituting a Zerox 914 for their existing equipment they would be able to handle the entire workload with the one machine. Output from the new machine looks better, the machine is cheaper and the cost of additional duplicating equipment and operator salary has been avoided.

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DALLAS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Sale of Transit Privileges

Sale and exchange of transit privileges by the Dallas Commodity Office realized a savings of nearly \$3 million during the past year for ASCS. Transit privileges are allowances on rail freight charges when moving commodities in a generally straight line towards a port. The commodities may be stopped and stored enroute and when they are again moved toward a port the freight rate is substantially lower than if the shipment were considered as a new shipment rather than as a continuation of an old one. CCC obtains these privileges as a result of the rail freight rate structure and retains them by paying renewal charges for them periodically.

In the Dallas area approximately five of every seven, or 254,000, cars of wheat and milo have these transit privileges. While there is no way of actually determining the dollar value of these privileges until the grain reaches port, they probably exceed \$100 million at this time.

At the same time that new storage was being built in the Dallas area to handle grain moving towards Gulf ports from the congested grain areas to the north, the P.I.K. program was tending to freeze CCC's stocks out of the export markets. As a result, investment in transit in the Dallas area increased appreciably. The increase in transit for milo was particularly acute as only a very small percentage of the milo inventory is moved each year. Renewal charges for transit on these stocks would have more than offset the value of the investment in a short time. Wheat transit has not been accumulating as rapidly but even so at current turnover rates a minimum of two years renewals would be paid on every bushel of wheat in the area.

To meet the hazard of potential loss of money, the Dallas office devised two plans for economically disposing of aging or expiring transit. The first plan permits warehousemen to apply CCC transit to outbound shipments of non CCC grain. The warehouseman then reimburses CCC for

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DALLAS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

the value of the transit applied. The second plan is for CCC to trade its grain and related transit in terminal elevators for comparable grain without transit in country elevators. CCC is reimbursed for its investment in transit as a part of the transaction.

An effect of the second plan is to move CCC holdings in grain further away from ports to country houses. Subsequent movement of these stocks would thus result in an additional $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents per bushel in and out charge at terminals except that this year the amount of Kansas City grain received in the Dallas area was equal to the amount of grain Dallas had taken in country houses as part of the trade, and the Kansas City grain was put in the vacated terminal space rather than country elevators as is usually the case. Thus, the usual $2\frac{1}{2}$ cent in and out charges for Kansas City grain was saved, offsetting the additional cost expected for CCC grain acquired in country houses.

The second plan, in addition to saving the transit renewal charges, has eliminated interest charges on a \$6,500,000 investment in freight. In addition, the grain CCC received in the trade is frequently of a better quality than that given up in the terminals (protein wheat, for example, is often delivered on ordinary receipts). The country grain without transit is worth more in the Dallas area for local sales, such as those expected under the Feed Grain Program, than is terminal grain with transit. Finally, grain that is moved from the country to the terminal house will have new transit good for two years without renewal charges.

Savings on transit for wheat and milo amounted to \$772,120 through April 1961 under the first plan, the sale of transit. Under plan two, exchange of terminal grain and transit for country grain, \$2,155,000 had been saved during the same period.

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DALLAS ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Reduced Clerical Effort for Warehouse Examiners

To reduce the time warehouse examiners now spend transcribing data from warehouse capacity charts to other forms used in measuring quantities of grain in storage, the Dallas Commodity Office is recording capacities and quantities on magnetic tapes for immediate recall. The new system permits the office to use equipment to provide data to examiners which they formerly had to develop through time consuming posting and calculating. In addition, the system provides a permanent record of the storage capacities of all houses in a manner that permits sorting according to type, location and other factors as the occasion demands.

ASCS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

CINCINNATI ASCS COMMODITY OFFICE

Instructions for Warehousemen

Warehousemen offering their facilities for the storage of processed commodities now have available to them a current, concise manual of USDA-CCC requirements for receiving, storing and shipping processed commodities. The manual, a revision of July, 1957 instructions contains general policy statements as well as information about storage contracts and storage practices for specific processed commodities. It describes the procedures and documentation necessary to receive, store and ship processed commodities. Up-to-date illustrations are included in the manual.

The manual was developed by operating personnel primarily concerned with storage contracts and storage management practices. Public warehousemen also participated in the development of the manual.

Personnel Management for Executives

An official of the Cincinnati office recently attended the Army's Mid Western Personnel Management for Executives Conference in Indianapolis. A departure from traditional training techniques, which was a featured presentation at the conference, was evaluated as being worthwhile for other members of the Cincinnati staff. The Conference's purposes were to provide a broad perspective of personnel management and its relationship to total management and operating and staff officials; to explain current methods of increasing the effectiveness of personnel management and how to improve the skills needed to effectively manage people.

The course included case discussions, general lecture sessions, individual studies, and work group activities. The Conference, which ran for eight days, is believed to be a useful one and the attendance of other supervisory employees at future conferences is planned.

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WASHINGTON DIVISIONS



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ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

Records Management System

The development of a single comprehensive system for the maintenance of current and semi-current daily operating records in ASC county offices has resulted in savings of \$287,350 over the past 5 years. The ASC offices maintain in excess of 300,000 cubic feet of records located at more than 3,000 locations. The file drawers required to store these records, if laid end to end, would reach 105 miles. In a normal year, an additional 85,000 cubic feet of records are generated in ASC.

The Administrative Services Division designed and helped install and maintain the new records management system. The program is carried out through a central office staff of specialists and technicians in paper work management and specially trained personnel in each field office. There were four general areas in the system development process.

First, the broad question of the necessity or desirability of a national uniform system was reviewed in light of disparate requirements of record keeping systems for the variety of agricultural commodities dealt with by ASCS in localized areas. The desirability of a single system which could be patterned for each State was established. The system was constructed to give each primary subject a functional code in the form of a letter prefix. Further breakdowns within the primary subject have numerical functional codes.

The second area concerned the excessive cost of supplies and equipment. Inexpensive press board guides were substituted for expensive metal tab guides. Conventional mucilage-back labels were replaced by pressure-sensitive labels which can be applied dry and last longer. Inexpensive straight cut folders replaced expensive celluloid angle-tab folders.

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ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION

The third area was concerned with minimizing the man-power cost to change more than ten million file folders. To do this, addressograph equipment was utilized in each State. Each machine will reproduce labels at the rate of 60 per minute, approximately ten times faster than they can be reproduced by manual typing.

The fourth area was making the filing system attractive and interesting at a nominal cost. To improve the appearance of the files and to make association of a folder to a program easier, different colored labels have been adopted for each program.

As with any new system or program its success is dependent upon the willingness with which the people who work with it accept it. As an aid to gaining the necessary acceptance a set of color slides, synchronized with a sound tape, is used to illustrate the system, the advantages it offers, and its simplicity of operation. When the system has been thoroughly explained it is modified by State Office personnel and Records Analysts to meet local conditions.

Intangible benefits to the States from the system include time savings in filing and finding material, reduce file space, and simplification of audits from the ease with which the auditor can find material in filing systems that are similar in all States.

ASCS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

COTTON DIVISION

Storage Costs for Cotton

Results of a recent cost survey conducted by the Cotton Division for the Administrator showed that charges for storing cotton in commercial warehouses were equitable. With the aid of the Investigation and Internal Audit Divisions, 281 warehouses of the 1217 approved warehouses throughout the South were visited. Warehousemen were uniformly cooperative in providing the data necessary to determine their actual operating costs which serve as a basis for Departmental establishment of maximum rates for storage.

To prepare for the study, it was necessary to train people who were to do the field work for one week in the New Orleans Commodity Office. In addition, forms and instructions developed for the study were tested in ten warehouses prior to the beginning of the actual survey.

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MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

OPERATIONS ANALYSIS STAFF

Organization Surveys

The Minneapolis and Portland Commodity Offices undertook surveys of their organizational structures with the aid of the Operations Analysis Staff and the Personnel Management Division. The structure of each office proved to be basically sound and free of severe problems.

In Minneapolis responsibility for management analysis and data processing were largely centralized and given renewed emphasis. Certain staff functions were returned to line officials and the Office of the Director was strengthened with the addition of more responsibility to the position, Assistant to the Director.

Responsibility for management analysis was likewise largely centralized in Portland and data processing was raised in the Fiscal Division's structure so that it would be accessible to all divisions in the office. The Administrative Staff was separated into an Administrative Services Division and a Personnel Management Division. The latter function is thereby now immediately responsible to the Office of the Director. As in Minneapolis the position Assistant to the Director was strengthened.

The relatively slight revisions in the structure of each office provide as a by-product more flexible channels for the development of executive talent. Responsibility for increasing emphasis and interest in simplifying workflow and improving efficiency through modern techniques of designing systems and utilizing automatic equipment is pinpointed. These revisions clearly reflect the management philosophy of the new staffs in the office of each Director.

ASCS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

OPERATIONS ANALYSIS STAFF

Statistical Sampling

The Dallas Commodity Office and the Operations Analysis Staff together developed a means of costing wheat blending by manual and computer methods. The comparative costs were developed from scientifically drawn statistical samples of blends by both methods. The study validated the favorable results of an operations research technique developed to blend grain represented by warehouse receipts so as to fill a loading order with the least valuable grain permitted by the contract.

The results of the statistical study have been published in a report entitled "Statistical Analysis of Wheat Blending." The analysis indicates that computer blending in fiscal year 1961 will have brought about program savings approximating \$92,000 on a volume of 24 million bushels.

ASCS MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

BUDGET DIVISION

Review of Special Programs Financed by CCC

Analysis of budgets for special programs financed from CCC funds will be substantially improved by two recent innovations. The number of such programs has increased sharply in recent years and difficulties in adequately reviewing budgets for these special programs have multiplied.

The Budget Division has prepared comprehensive background reports for each special program for each year since their inception. The reports are maintained with cumulative information and are readily available to operating officials and anyone who reviews CCC's budgets.

A proposal to revise the appropriation structure would make it possible for the Bureau of the Budget and Appropriations Committees to consider the funds required for these programs prior to when the costs are actually incurred. Review of estimates would be made prior to the fiscal year rather than at the end when dollar commitments have already been made.

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FISCAL DIVISION

Improved Information About Operations

Explanatory statements will play a more important role in future press releases and financial statements concerning the results of CCC operations. The Fiscal Division intends to emphasize such factors as; why inventories are so large, why losses are so high, what the prospects are for continued losses or gains and what is included in CCC inventories. In the past these reports were largely confined to describing the magnitude of CCC investment in inventories and loans and the amount of losses sustained.

In carrying out the new policy press releases will be constructed to include; anticipated losses on inventories to be disposed of, the effect of transportation and handling charges on CCC's investment in acquired inventory, and a summary of major items of CCC's realized losses for the present and past years. Special analysis of selected operations will be released periodically. They will include the relationship of carrying charges to losses and an explanation of CCC's borrowing authority.

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SUGAR DIVISION

Wages for Sugar Beet Field Workers

Wages for workers in sugar beet fields have had two scales since 1947. For the 1961 crop year one wage base is being used to reflect the more uniform wage structure that now prevails throughout the sugar beet raising area. The Sugar Division has been responsible for developing and issuing wage determinations, one for an area stretching through parts of Oregon, California and Nevada and another for the remainder of the beet growing area.

The new single rate includes a uniform hourly rate and redesignated and defined piecework rates for hand labor. The single schedule saves many man hours of labor in preparation of wage determinations. It is no longer necessary to prepare Spanish translations of the schedules, printing costs are reduced and instructions for field personnel are simplified since only one schedule needs to be considered.

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PERFORMANCE DIVISION

Revised Contract Specifications for Aerial Photography

New special conditions in contracts for aerial photography are expected to encourage contractors to complete and deliver aerial photographs at an earlier date. A bonus payment will be awarded contractors who complete and deliver acceptable photography of an entire area within specified time limits. Failure to complete the contract within the specified time limit will result in termination of the contract. The cost of renegotiating coverage for these areas will be borne by the defaulting contractors. These two provisions should, in addition to encouraging more timely completion of aerial photography, reduce the number of liquidated damage claims brought about by contract default. Thus, costly administrative claims procedures could be minimized.

Work Simplification

Methods and procedures in the Sales Unit of the Eastern Laboratory have recently been reviewed. The study revealed techniques and equipment that were becoming out of date. Duplications of effort and files are being eliminated. Improved filing systems are being installed. The study has led to consideration of microfilm as a means of filing photo indices. Microfilmed records hold promise of providing a considerable number of benefits.

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TOBACCO DIVISION

Simplified Preparation of Tabular Reports

Substantial reductions in laborious typing and multiple report preparation have resulted from adopting a new multi purpose form for certain Tobacco Division reports. The new form is multilithed and carries the constant headings and information. The forms serve as good worksheets for preparing drafts of reports as well as serving for the final report itself. Only variable data such as dates, current data and estimates need be filled in. The new form has substantially reduced typing time and has permitted the elimination of several reports which in turn has reduced clerical, supply and duplicating costs.



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